

2013 Governor's Ambassador Award Winners

Customer Service Award

Dusty Whitaker

Department for Community Based Services

Cabinet for Health and Family Services

As a Social Service Clinician who provides recruitment and certification services, Dusty Whitaker goes out of her way to assist families through the entire foster care and adoption process. She is friendly and courteous, putting families at ease as she provides information and answers questions. She supports families' decisions and shares the many ways they can be involved in foster care and adoption. Dusty is innovative and diligent in her efforts to recruit, support and train families. Dusty works tirelessly to affirm that paperwork is processed efficiently so that families and the children they care for are not lost in the red tape and loopholes while waiting for permanency.

Dusty collaborates with local foster care and adoption groups and maintains relationships with the organization leaders. She participates in community events to help raise awareness. She goes above and beyond her job description to ensure her foster families have the necessary resources to provide for the children in their care. While maintaining a heavy case load, she still finds time to personally interact with each of her families. Dusty always puts her best foot forward. She is an outstanding professional who proudly represents her agency with a friendly smile and positive attitude.

Community Service/Volunteerism Award

Marcie Lowe

Education Professional Standards Board

Education and Workforce Development Cabinet



Marcie Lowe serves as an ongoing inspiration to all who know her in the workplace and in the community. She strives and succeeds daily to do an exceptional job in her duties at the Education Professional Standards Board. Her contact work with the public in handling open records requests exceeds expectations. Marcie's leadership and communication skills are showcased in her work as a liaison with the legislature, with agency KECC duties and her many positions held with the Franklin County Relay for Life.

Marcie continually and consistently surpasses agency and volunteer expectations. She has served in leadership roles with the Franklin County Relay for Life for the past 10 years. In

the midst of all her work and volunteer efforts, Marcie tirelessly gives her time and energy to a personal battle with cancer.

Marcie possesses incredible abilities as a team leader, and she uses these skills to enthusiastically inspire teamwork. Volunteers WANT to help; they request to be members of her teams. She converts fund raisers from methodical efforts into parties and then shows her teams the blessings that come from giving. It would be impossible to fully credit Marcie with the investments she has given to others within

her personal life and her state government career. Her actions of giving continue to impact the many lives she touches.

Courage Award

Sterling Barker
Department of Aviation
Transportation Cabinet



On May 16th, 2013, Sterling Barker was working at the Capital City Airport when he heard an unusually loud airplane engine noise. He investigated the source of the noise and discovered an unmanned airplane at full throttle spinning in circles on the ramp. He then spotted an elderly gentleman clinging to the wing strut. He was being dragged and was visibly distressed. Sterling realized the man could not hold on much longer. He also determined the aircraft would hit the man if he let go of the wing strut. A prop strike would have likely been fatal. Sterling placed his own life in danger by timing his approach to the spinning airplane and quickly grabbing the other strut. This action allowed him to maintain control of the spinning airplane and save the pilot from serious injury or death.

Mr. Barker is an admirable employee of the Department of Aviation. Though he is not trained in aircraft operations, he placed his own life in danger while trying to assist a distressed pilot.

Professional Achievement

Ed Ross
Office of the Controller
Finance and Administration Cabinet



Ed Ross is the State Controller in the Finance and Administration Cabinet. He began a long and industrious career as an accountant in the State Police budget office in 1957. In his 45 years of service to the Commonwealth, Ed has seen pencil and ledger accounting move to technology driven processes such as STARS, MARS and eMARS. He has truly embraced technology and has been influential in helping design and implement the systems that have carried statewide accounting out of the dark ages and into the world of reduced duplication, improved and efficient processing, increased reporting capabilities and prompt, accurate payments.

In 1994, the general assembly established the Office of the Controller in the Finance and Administration Cabinet. Ed has

served as the state controller since its inception; he pilots the development of the Commonwealth's strategic financial management program. He has provided guidance and counsel on numerous budgetary, expense or reimbursement regulations and bond allocations.

He has ably served state government agencies and employees, citizens of the Commonwealth, legislators and the general assembly. Ed is a consummate professional who goes above and beyond, always has a kind word to say and is recognized nationally by peers and professional organizations.

Leadership Award

Stephanie Hold

Office of Inspector General

Cabinet for Health and Family Services



Upon the passage in 2012 of Kentucky's prescription drug abuse legislation, House Bill 1, Stephanie Hold lead the Office of Inspector General's efforts to enhance and improve the KASPER program, an important tool used to address the problem of prescription drug abuse and diversion in Kentucky. Stephanie's efforts improved and enhanced KASPER, and the ability to work together with physicians, nurses, law enforcement professional licensing boards, lawmakers and other stakeholders. Her hard work is worthy of recognition for a difficult job done well.

Stephanie provided in-depth KASPER training and was successful in implementing data sharing with Alabama, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and South Carolina. She worked tirelessly to improve the quality and timeliness of the KASPER data. In order to meet the increased demands for KASPER registrations and usage, Stephanie managed and directed the implementation of new system and technological improvements.

Stephanie's efforts will impact the Commonwealth of Kentucky for years to come. She is a shining example for the Governor's Ambassador Leadership Award.

Teamwork Award

Western Laboratory Branch

Kentucky State Police

Justice & Public Safety Cabinet



In December, 2012 and January, 2013, the Kentucky State Police Western Laboratory Branch relocated to a new facility designed and built to meet the needs of the laboratory. Before, during and after the relocation process, the twelve branch employees demonstrated outstanding teamwork, leadership and cost-saving skills.

In preparation for the move, surplus property was dealt with and non-essential items were packed using donated boxes and recycled packing material. At the time of the

actual move, the entire laboratory worked together to pack and relocate fragile laboratory equipment. Once at the new location, employees worked together to install necessary items for different sections of the laboratory, sometimes creating those necessary items with their own tools and skills. Employees applied durable finishes and assembled work benches. Chemists helped install gas lines and the manifold system used in both the drug chemistry and toxicology sections. Breath alcohol technicians relocated their section while maintaining 30 instrument sites throughout western Kentucky. The biology section traveled to Central Laboratory to work on cases in order to avoid interruptions in services. A single analyst took on the responsibility of setting up the toxicology section. Countless hours were spent with laboratory set up all while maintaining day-to-day responsibilities.

The Western Laboratory completed the relocation process and was operational on January 22, 2013. Currently, each section is working cases at or beyond previous year's numbers even though the laboratory was shut down for most of January. The team comes to work every day ready to work hard and put their new facility to use. For these reasons and more, the employees at the Western Laboratory are commended for a job well-done.